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General and complete disarmament

Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects

Report of the Secretary General

Summary

The present report provides an overview of reported activities undertaken by the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and Member States pertaining to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 63/72, on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects.

It also summarizes activities reported at the national, regional and subregional levels by the United Nations, States and organizations that are in a position to provide assistance to States in their efforts to curb the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons and in their collection and disposal, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 63/66.

During the reporting period, efforts by all stakeholders to further develop and implement small arms control measures have continued. An increased emphasis is notable not only on curbing the supply of illicit small arms and light weapons but also on simultaneously stemming demand for these weapons.

The successful reinvigoration of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism is a reflection of the growing acknowledgement among United Nations entities of the importance of a coherent approach to small arms issues.

The present report covers the period from August 2008 to July 2009.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 63/72 entitled "The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects", the General Assembly endorsed the report adopted at the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects (A/CONF.192/BMS/2008/3). In the resolution, the Assembly encouraged all States to implement the measures highlighted in the section of the report entitled "The way forward" and underlined that the issue of the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects required concerted efforts at the national, regional and international levels and that their uncontrolled spread in many regions of the world had a wide range of humanitarian and socio-economic consequences and posed a serious threat to peace, reconciliation, safety, security, stability and sustainable development. It also requested the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the resolution.

2. By its resolution 63/66 entitled "Assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them", the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General and those States and organizations that were in a position to do so to continue to provide assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them, and encouraged cooperation among State organs, international organizations and civil society in supporting programmes and projects to that end. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to continue to consider the matter and to report to it thereon at its sixty-fourth session.

3. The present report is submitted pursuant to the requests made by the General Assembly in the above-mentioned resolutions. To enable a coherent approach to these overlapping and interconnected issues, both resolutions are addressed together in the report.

II. Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and assistance to States for curbing the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and collecting them

A. United Nations system

Security Council

4. As one of the measures stipulated under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council maintains several arms embargoes that prohibit all States from supplying arms and related materiel, as well as from providing related technical training or assistance, to the target State, region, individual or entity. In particular, six arms embargoes are currently in place in Africa in order to address

specific conflicts, which are fuelled, to a great extent, by the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, or to help ensure stability in post-conflict situations.[1]

5. During the period under review, the mandates of the expert groups[2] that monitor the implementation on the ground of arms embargoes in respective States have been extended by the Security Council. In their reports,[3] each of the expert groups recommended ways to strengthen the effectiveness of the arms embargo measure. Furthermore, the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and the joint United Nations-African Union Mission in Darfur, previously tasked by the Council to monitor the arms embargoes in their areas of operations, will continue to retain this aspect of their respective mandates.

6. By its resolution 1844 (2008), the Security Council further strengthened the general and complete arms embargo on Somalia and imposed a targeted arms embargo on individuals and entities designated by the Sanctions Committee. In addition, the Council imposed a travel ban and/or an assets freeze on individuals and entities designated by the Sanctions Committee as having acted in violation of the general and complete arms embargo.

7. Field missions mandated by the Security Council have also continued their work on small arms issues, in close cooperation with the United Nations country teams. Activities included support for a national commission for civilian disarmament and combating small arms proliferation in Burundi, disbandment of illegal armed groups in Afghanistan, support for local authorities in weapons destruction programmes in Timor-Leste and the putting in place of mechanisms for the disposal of weapons and ammunition in Liberia. In Liberia, the United Nations Police Firearms Inspection Team has continued to monitor the arms embargo and has carried out regular inspections of armouries and inventories of weapons and ammunition that have been procured by the Government of Liberia under exceptions to Security Council resolution 1521 (2003), alongside efforts by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to enhance Government capacity to collect and destroy illicit small arms and light weapons.

8. As a subsidiary body to the Security Council, the Counter-Terrorism Committee is mandated to monitor the implementation of Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), in which it is specified that all States should eliminate the supply of weapons to terrorists. The Committee is assisted in its work by the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. As part of its technical assistance strategy, the Executive Directorate has continued to undertake assessment

[1] The six arms embargo regimes in Africa relate to Côte d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and the Sudan. In addition, the Council has imposed a targeted arms embargo on Al-Qaida and the Taliban and associated individuals and entities, an arms embargo in connection with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (with the exception of the supply by States to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of small arms and light weapons, on which these States must notify the relevant Sanctions Committee in advance) and an export ban on arms and related materiel from the Islamic Republic of Iran.

[2] Monitoring Group on Somalia, Panel of Experts on Liberia, Panel of Experts on the Sudan, Group of Experts on the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Group of Experts on Côte d'Ivoire.

[3] These reports are published as documents of the Security Council and are available on the websites of the Security Council Committees to whom these expert groups report (see www.un.org/sc/committees/).

visits in order to identify the needs of Member States and to facilitate delivery of technical assistance. During the reporting period, the Executive Directorate participated in the work of the Burundi configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission and took part in inter-agency group assessment missions for the security sectors of Guinea-Bissau and Sierra Leone. An important dimension of those activities is the prevention of arms smuggling in the countries in question.

9. The continued concern of the Security Council with the issue of small arms was highlighted in an aide-memoire annexed to the Security Council presidential statement of 14 January 2009 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/PRST/2009/1), in which the need for States and regional and subregional organizations to adopt measures to curb and reduce the illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons was underscored. The aide-memoire also proposed that the Security Council should consider two other actions related to improved control over small arms and light weapons. The first was to encourage strengthened practical cooperation between United Nations peacekeeping and other relevant missions authorized by the Security Council aimed at monitoring and preventing the cross-border movement of small arms and light weapons. The second was to mandate United Nations peacekeeping and other relevant missions authorized by the Security Council to collect and dispose of or secure illicit and/or surplus small arms and light weapons as well as surplus ammunition stockpiles.

General Assembly

Follow-up to the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects

10. In the report adopted at the Third Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action (see A/CONF.192/BMS/2008/3), held in New York from 14 to 18 July 2009, States stressed the importance of regional approaches to the implementation of the Programme of Action and the usefulness, therefore, of convening regional meetings sponsored by interested States and international, regional and subregional organizations in a position to do so, in particular in the years between biennial meetings. They also welcomed a coordinating role by the United Nations, where needed, in setting up such regional meetings. In this connection, the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs organized in 2009 a meeting in Sydney, Australia for States of the Pacific region on implementation of the Programme of Action and a meeting in Kigali for States from Southern Africa, the Great Lakes region, and the Horn of Africa and bordering States. States of these regions further developed a regional approach to the implementation of the Programme of Action, thereby strengthening regional ownership and coordination, focusing on concrete and time-bound goals, and moving towards an alignment of their regional action plans and workplans with the United Nations cycle of meetings. Moreover, the outcomes of these meetings have included the identification of specific regional priorities, an appeal to incorporate armed violence reduction strategies in efforts to curb the illicit trade in small arms and a reference to the value of further developing measurability in the field of small arms control in order to improve the outcomes of capacity-building and programming. Additional regional meetings are expected to be convened before the

next Biennial Meeting of States, to be held from 14 to 18 June 2010, subject to extrabudgetary funding.

Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism

11. During the reporting period, the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism achieved broader participation within the United Nations system. It strengthened its coordination role in the area of small arms, culminating in the endorsement of a strategic framework for the period 2009-2013, which includes small arms demand and armed violence reduction issues. The mechanism has enhanced its capacity for information sharing since the launch in July 2008 of the Programme of Action Implementation Support System (see www.poa-iss.org). The system is a web-based comprehensive information tool for all stakeholders who wish to contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action.

12. In recent years, the United Nations system has been successful in setting technical standards in specific thematic areas, such as mine action and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. In the same vein, the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism has embarked on a project to develop international small arms control standards: a set of internationally accepted and validated technical standards that provide comprehensive guidance to practitioners and policymakers on legal, policy and operational issues surrounding small arms control. The project envisages the completion of a set of standards by the Fourth Biennial Meeting of States to Consider the Implementation of the Programme of Action, scheduled for June 2010.

Office for Disarmament Affairs: regional centres

13. The Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa is in the process of expanding its small arms-related activities to all of Africa. The Centre widened its Small Arms Transparency and Control Regime in Africa database to include a register and database of brokers and of licences for brokering activities in Eastern African States. The Centre is cooperating with the African Union to develop a coherent continental strategy to prevent the proliferation of small arms and light weapons. The Centre also launched a project entitled "Regulating small arms and light weapons brokering in Africa" and assisted the National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons of Togo in drafting the Commission report on measuring the impact of small arms on the civilian population. Moreover, as requested by the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, the Centre is preparing a draft legally binding instrument for the control of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa (see para. 37 below); it also prepared for the framework a code of conduct for defence and security forces.

14. The Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific organized a regional seminar held in Kathmandu from 17 to 18 June 2009 on the illicit brokering of small arms and light weapons in Central Asia and South Asia. In February 2009, the Centre also hosted a workshop on small arms and light weapons for non-governmental organizations, aiming at assessing the contribution of civil society in combating the proliferation and misuse of small arms and light weapons in the Asia and Pacific region. The Centre highlighted its role on small arms issues in the Pacific through its active participation in the regional meeting on the Programme of Action held in Sydney from 22 to 23 June 2009.

15. The Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean continued to implement its train-the-trainers programme on combating illicit firearms trafficking by organizing courses for law enforcement officials in Colombia and Brazil. The Centre expanded the scope of its training methodology to include border control through a tri-border training initiative that included law enforcement officials from Brazil, Colombia and Peru.

16. The Centre and the Organization of American States (OAS) also provided technical assistance to the Peruvian National Police for the destruction of firearms. As a result of this, and to strengthen the implementation of international best practices by national authorities, the Centre, jointly with OAS, developed a best practices manual on the destruction of surplus and/or obsolete weapons.

International Civil Aviation Organization

17. The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) continued to monitor progress in addressing the threat posed by man-portable air defence systems. In a review of progress in the implementation of ICAO Assembly resolution A36-19 (2007), conducted in January 2009, most of the States replying to the ICAO request for a status report indicated that the necessary measures were being taken to control the import, export, transfer and re-transfer of man-portable air defence systems, as well as stockpile management and transfer of the systems technology and production capability.

18. In addition, the ICAO Aviation Security Panel, which includes experts nominated by Contracting States and the aviation industry, continued to examine the issue of new and emerging threats, including the threat posed by man-portable air defence systems.

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

19. In accordance with the groundbreaking Machel Report of 1996, in June 2009 the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict launched the Machel Strategic Review, which draws attention to the obligation of States to protect children from the dangers posed by small arms and light weapons and provides guidance on the protection framework in terms both of stronger legislation and programmatic response to address the causes and effects of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons.

20. On 15 July 2008, the Special Representative co-organized, with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, a panel discussion entitled "Conflict of interests: children and guns in zones of instability", which aimed at raising awareness within the United Nations system on the dire consequences that the uncontrolled proliferation of small arms has on civilian populations, especially children. The results of the discussion were issued in February 2009 as an Office for Disarmament Affairs occasional paper.

United Nations Children's Fund

21. During the reporting period, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) continued advocacy, programming and partnerships at global, regional and country levels to promote the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of children.

22. UNICEF undertook advocacy and armed violence prevention initiatives in El Salvador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Papua New Guinea, Thailand and Trinidad and Tobago in order to address the impact of small arms proliferation on children and their communities. Advocacy and programming efforts focused on capacity development, victim assistance, conflict resolution and data gathering to promote resilience and strengthen the protective environment. UNICEF also assisted the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Development Assistance Committee in developing a policy paper on armed violence prevention and reduction.

23. UNICEF supported the development and implementation of a small arms risk education module in primary schools and kindergartens in Bosnia and Herzegovina. UNICEF is also developing an analysis of key findings on the impact of small arms on children in Brazil, Colombia, Haiti, Nepal, the Occupied Palestinian Territory, Senegal, South Africa and Yemen. It is envisaged that the document containing the analysis will be released in September 2009.

Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat

24. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, in cooperation with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, provided substantive and technical support to the Sri Lanka National Commission against Proliferation of Illicit Small Arms, including the launch of a national firearms registry database and training on its use. In addition, the Department assisted the National Commission in designing a weapons-for-development project for the post-conflict zones in the country.

25. The Department and the Office for Disarmament Affairs continued to provide support to the Guinea-Bissau National Small Arms Commission, in close coordination with the United Nations Peace-Building Support Office in Guinea-Bissau. However, progress on the project has been slow due to the deteriorating political circumstances in the country. For instance, the planned collection and destruction of small arms in the region of Gabú had to be postponed. The Department did support work on designing, preparing and conducting a sensitization campaign entitled "Vote without guns" before the general elections of 16 November 2008 in Guinea-Bissau and provided assistance in designing the first national small arms survey conducted in Guinea-Bissau by the National Commission.

United Nations Development Programme

26. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supported national Governments in over 30 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe to: (a) develop sound legislative provisions for strict small arms and light weapons control; (b) build the capacity of national commissions to develop national action plans on small arms and light weapons; (c) implement commitments on the marking and tracing of small arms and put into operation best practices on stockpile management; and (d) enhance the capacity of security agencies to collect, register or destroy illicit arms. During the reporting period, UNDP also produced and disseminated "how-to" guides to better assist national Governments in developing legislation on small arms and light weapons and in setting up national small arms and light weapons commissions.

27. Significant success in tackling the supply side of small arms proliferation was achieved in the States of the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union, with projects on arms destruction, stockpile management and the tightening of legislation in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Belarus, Croatia and Montenegro, all contributing to a reduction in the likelihood of irresponsible transfer of small arms to conflict areas and fragile States. UNDP continued to invest significant resources into tackling small arms and light weapons proliferation at the regional and subregional levels, with active support to regional small arms centres in South-East Europe and Central America.

28. Alongside efforts to strengthen controls over small arms and light weapons, UNDP deepened its work to support Governments in reducing the demand for weapons by developing and supporting armed violence prevention and community security and social cohesion programmes. The approach seeks to capacitate communities to tackle community-level conflict drivers and therefore act as an inhibitor to demand. Comprehensive approaches that integrate both types of programmes with traditional small arms and light weapons control to address the drivers of demand for arms were supported in, for example, Croatia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Jamaica, Kenya, Liberia, Papua New Guinea, South Sudan and Uganda. In keeping with the focus of addressing small arms and armed violence in a holistic manner, six United Nations entities (UNDP, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the Office for Disarmament Affairs, UNICEF and the World Health Organization) deepened their collaboration within the inter-agency Armed Violence Prevention Programme to help ensure increased coordinated support to Governments at risk of armed violence.

29. Throughout the year, UNDP worked with the Government of Switzerland and other States to encourage support for the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development (see www.genevadeclaration.org) and the subsequent support of programming on armed violence prevention in focus countries, including Burundi, Jamaica, Guatemala, Kenya, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste.

United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research

30. The United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research carried out a comparative analysis of post-manufacture marking instruments and practices for small arms and light weapons. The project included research on and analysis of existing legislations and a global survey focusing on post-manufacture and import marking practices and procedures.

31. The Institute also developed a security needs assessment protocol to assist agencies working on building community security in the formulation of armed violence reduction programmes at the local level. As a pilot, the protocol is being implemented in Nepal, in cooperation with UNICEF.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

32. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime finalized technical guidelines to assist Member States in implementing the control measures outlined in the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Their Parts and Components and Ammunition, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (the Firearms Protocol) and is working on a

model law on firearms to be issued in December 2009. In the context of its ongoing project in Colombia, the Office continued to assist the Government of Colombia in the destruction of arms seized or handed over to authorities by illegal groups in the process of their reintegration into civilian life.

33. Within the context of armed violence prevention, the Office, together with the Economic Commission for Europe, finalized a manual on victimization surveys aimed at assisting States in the planning and technical aspects of such surveys.

34. Throughout 2009, the Office continued the implementation of its project in Colombia on preventing and combating the illicit manufacturing and trafficking in firearms and ammunition to prevent crime and promote a culture of peace. Officials were trained on basic techniques for the control of the legal trade and the prevention of the illegal traffic of firearms, ammunition and explosives.

35. The Office organized with the Caribbean Community a regional workshop in Barbados to promote the Firearms Protocol and related instruments in the Caribbean region.

World Health Organization

36. During the course of the year, the World Health Organization (WHO) worked actively with five other United Nations agencies on finalizing the programming documentation for phase 2 of the Armed Violence Prevention Programme, which is a joint United Nations programme contributing to a more coherent and evidence-guided approach to armed violence and its prevention. Phase 2 of the Programme will develop programming in Kenya, Guatemala and Jamaica. WHO also provided input for a number of other global processes, notably the Caribbean Community summit on the prevention of youth crime and violence prevention, and provided support for national and provincial violence prevention policy and programme development activities in countries from most regions of the world and towards the review of the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, which was held in Geneva during the reporting period.

B. Activities undertaken at the regional and subregional levels

Africa

37. The Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) reported that during the 28th ministerial meeting of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee on Security Questions in Central Africa, held in Libreville from 4 to 8 May 2009, member States requested that a legal instrument for the control of small arms and light weapons in Central Africa be adopted by 2010. ECCAS also initiated implementation of two main programmes: the "Border programme", which focuses on cross-border security, and the "Awareness campaign on security sector reform". In January 2009, ECCAS began funding a project aimed at modernizing Cameroon's national legislation on small arms and light weapons.

38. The Regional Centre on Small Arms and Light Weapons, which covers States from the Great Lakes region, the Horn of Africa and bordering States, reported that it had supported its member States Djibouti, Kenya and Rwanda in the destruction of small arms and light weapons and ammunition. As part of its ongoing efforts in the area of stockpile management, the Regional Centre also supported the

organization in Nairobi of a regional seminar for East Africa on physical security and stockpile management and held a small arms and light weapons brokering seminar in Kigali for its member States. The seminar facilitated the information exchange between participating States on matters of regional cooperation, joint operations and legislative measures for the control of trade in arms.

39. The Regional Centre continued to support the efforts of the States in its region to mark small arms and light weapons. It facilitated train-the-trainer workshops in Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. The aim of the workshops was to train selected officials on the use of newly acquired marking machines and to review existing best practice guidelines on the marking of weapons.

40. The Regional Centre was nominated to function as the secretariat for the newly established Steering Committee of the African Union and Regional Bodies on Small Arms and Light Weapons.

41. The Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization reported that it has developed standard operating procedures for the implementation of the Protocol on the Control of Firearms, Ammunition and Other Related Materials in the Southern African Development Community Region.

42. The Southern African Regional Police Chiefs Cooperation Organization is actively working on providing training courses on the marking of firearms and on a unified firearms database for the region.

Americas

43. The Andean Community reported that it has embarked on a three-year project entitled "Justice and combating crime in the Andean Community". The programme aims at strengthening cooperation and assistance among the member States of the Andean Community to combat organized crime, including the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, by facilitating cooperation between attorney-generals, police and judicial and other authorities.

44. The Andean Community designated national points of contact as well as national coordination committees within its member States in accordance with the "Andean Plan to prevent, combat, and eradicate illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects" adopted in June 2003.

45. The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) reported the signing of a memorandum of understanding on the "e-Trace" system between countries and territories of the Eastern and Southern Caribbean with the United States of America. The memorandum of understanding is aimed at enhancing the capacity of member States of CARICOM to trace illicit small arms and light weapons that are found in the Caribbean subregion, in conformity with the commitments undertaken by States under the International Tracing Instrument to Enable States to Identify and Trace, in a Timely and Reliable Manner, Illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons (International Tracing Instrument). Moreover, CARICOM signed a memorandum of understanding with INTERPOL to enhance information exchange in support of criminal investigations, including exchanges related to the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons as an element of organized crime. In December 2008, CARICOM finalized the Regional Integrated Ballistic Information Network, which is a network for sharing and comparing ballistic data. The first seminar of CARICOM ballistics experts and firearms examiners was conducted at Port-of-Spain in January 2009.

CARICOM has also established an Advance Cargo Information System, which will enable customs authorities to examine in advance documents presented for import and export and determine whether any item, including small arms and light weapons, requires special attention.

46. The Central American Programme on Small Arms Control reported that it assisted in the establishment of the national commissions on small arms and light weapons of Costa Rica and Nicaragua. In November 2008, the Programme carried out the first regional workshop for those national commissions.

47. Within the reporting period, as part of the ongoing "No weapons, thanks" awareness campaign, the Programme supported the destruction of 12,996 arms in Nicaragua and 1,759 arms in Costa Rica. In addition, the project entitled "Fighting the proliferation of small arms and light weapons: strengthening of custom controls, information and recording systems and border areas" was launched, supporting national authorities in the implementation of arms control systems, fostering cross-border cooperation and promoting the strengthening of civil society. From 20 to 23 April 2009, the Programme took part in the regional seminar on armed violence and development in Central America, organized by UNDP and the Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and helped to establish road maps focusing on youth violence, security companies, border control and joint work with municipalities.

48. The Organization of American States (OAS) reported that it is making progress in the development of model legislation on the confiscation or forfeiture of firearms. The model legislation is still under consideration by OAS member States, which will also take up draft model legislation on record-keeping, confidentiality and exchange of information. In November 2008, OAS supported Peru in planning to incorporate international standards for weapons destruction into Peruvian police procedures. Over 42,000 weapons were destroyed, using best practice procedures developed by the United Nations and by OAS.

Asia and the Pacific

49. The Pacific Islands Forum reported that it began developing a control of ammunition project for its member States. A toolkit will be developed to include required legislative provisions and amendments, literature on the registration of weapons and holders of weapons, and educational material on firearm safety and handling. Also during the reporting period, the Forum continued to support such regional programmes as the strengthening of armouries project implemented by Australia and New Zealand and the weapons disposal programme component of the Bougainville Peace Agreement.

Europe

50. The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) reported that it has initiated regular coordination meetings for assistance projects on small arms and light weapons and on stockpiles of conventional ammunition, with a view to avoiding duplication, sharing expertise and experience, and using resources effectively.

51. During the 16th Ministerial Council, held on 4 and 5 December 2008, OSCE participating States were encouraged to bring national laws, regulations and

administrative procedures into line with the International Tracing Instrument. The meeting also requested OSCE participating States to establish or to reinforce a legal framework for lawful brokering activities within their national jurisdiction by the end of 2010. With respect to the verification of end-user certification, the OSCE Forum for Security Cooperation decided to conduct an information exchange regarding sample formats of end-user certificates and relevant verification procedures. In addition, OSCE organized in October 2008 an assessment visit to Cyprus, upon its request, to provide assistance in the destruction of 324 man-portable air defence systems. From 27 to 28 November 2008, the OSCE Centre in Ashgabat organized a workshop on effective stockpile management and security and destruction of small arms and light weapons and ammunition.

52. The Centre for Security Cooperation reported that in cooperation with Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, it organized a seminar on marking and tracing as control measures to prevent and combat trafficking in small arms and light weapons. The seminar served as a platform for exchanging experiences and lessons learned and for the identification of means to harmonize processes for curbing small arms smuggling between the countries in the region.

53. The South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons reported that it assisted Western Balkan countries, together with the Regional Cooperation Council, in developing a regional arms export report. It has also developed management information software that has been used by national authorities in the region to collect, analyse and publish data on arms exports.

54. In terms of support to legislation development, the South-Eastern and Eastern Europe Clearinghouse for the Control of Small Arms and Light Weapons contributed to a comparative legal research project that produced recommendations for the adoption and amendment of national legislation related to the control of weapons acquisition and possession. The recommendations have benefited the Governments of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro, in particular. It continued to update its regional micro-disarmament standards and guidelines to reflect best operational practices in the region and beyond.

C. Activities undertaken by intergovernmental organizations

55. INTERPOL reported that during the reporting period its firearms programme developed a three-pronged approach to assist in firearms intelligence. The first is the INTERPOL Firearms Reference Table, a web-based application available on its I-24/7 network that enables investigators to correctly identify a firearm before submitting a trace request. In the reporting period, the INTERPOL Firearms Reference Table contained over 250,000 firearms references and 57,000 high-quality digital images. The second tool, launched in December 2008, is the INTERPOL Firearms Trace Request, a structured form that is linked to the INTERPOL Firearms Reference Table and that gives investigators the international communications tool to request tracing information from the firearm's country of origin or import. INTERPOL has also expanded access to these two tools to law enforcement entities that do not have access to the I-24/7 network, through a secure website. In addition, the organization launched the INTERPOL Ballistics Information Network, which permits the transnational sharing or comparing of ballistics data.

56. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Development Assistance Committee reported that its member States endorsed a policy paper on armed violence reduction. The document identifies a number of emerging trends, such as the linkage between conflict and crime, armed violence in developing countries, and increasing youth populations in the global South. Based on the policy paper, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Development Assistance Committee is in the process of developing practical programming notes on a range of key armed violence reduction issues, including on urban violence and youth violence. It is envisaged that the complete draft programming notes will be available for review by the end of 2009. A comprehensive mapping of armed violence reduction programmes is also due to commence in the coming months.

III. Observations and conclusions

57. During the reporting period, efforts within the United Nations agencies, international organizations and regional organizations to further develop and implement small arms control measures have continued. An increased emphasis not only on curbing the supply of illicit small arms and light weapons, but also on simultaneously stemming demand for these weapons, is notable.

58. The successful reinvigoration of the Coordinating Action on Small Arms mechanism is a reflection of the growing acknowledgement among United Nations entities of the importance of a coordinated approach to small arms issues.